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US Ambassador Visits the USAID Business Without Borders Project

Today, the US Ambassador Paul Wohlers visited the USAID Business without Borders project, implemented by the Business Start-up Centre (BSC) in Bitola. USAID awarded U.S. \$1.3 million to the BSC for this three-year project that works to accelerate economic growth in southern Macedonia by assisting small and medium enterprises.

"The USAID Business Without Borders project has had a very productive year," said Ambassador Wohlers. "In 2011, they trained over 700 people from all over Pelagonia in different business skills, helped 33 entrepreneurs to start and register their businesses, and assisted 33 existing companies to improve their performance. As a result, 57 new jobs have been created."

The Ambassador heard the business ideas of high school students participating in a mini competition: "Easter Through the Eyes of the Entrepreneur." He also visited the companies that are tenants of the Centre's Business Incubator and heard about the support they receive from the project. In addition, the Ambassador witnessed part of a business plan competition that was underway at the Centre, where entrepreneurs seeking project support presented their business plans.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested over \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is working with the people of Macedonia to create jobs, strengthen democratic institutions and practices, enhance integrated education, and prepare students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov> or our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/USAIDMacedonia>